

# IMMIGRATION TO AND EMIGRATION FROM GERMANY IN THE LAST FEW YEARS

*Bernd Geiss\**

## **Germany, Destination for Migrants**

Germany is in the middle of Europe and has common borders with nine countries. Therefore, geographically, it is cut out to be a country of immigration and emigration. Of its total population of 82 million, 8.7 percent (7.1 million) are foreigners (holders of only foreign passports), 2.5 million of whom are citizens from other member countries of the European Union (EU). Citizens of EU-member countries have, in addition to national citizenship, what is called a Union citizenship. Except the rights to vote and to run in national elections, EU citizens have the same rights as national citizens. As Germany has been a receiving country for migrants for nearly 60 years, it now has a migrant population (holders of only foreign passports plus naturalized persons) of 15.7 million. One-fifth of the total population has a migrant background.

## **Europe, a Continent of Internal Migration**

France has 64 million inhabitants; the United Kingdom (UK), 62 million; Italy, 60 million; Spain, 45 million; and Poland, 38 million. The whole EU has a population of half a billion, 6.5 percent of whom (32 million) are foreigners. Compared with other regions of the world, these figures are relatively small. In 2010, 3.2 million immigrants entered Europe and 2.2 million emigrants left. The positive migration balance was about one million. In terms of figures, contrary to many Europeans' impression, Europe is not a big player in the field of international migration. Migration in Europe is mainly internal. The EU still does not have a comprehensive migration policy. However, in May 2009, it agreed on a directive concerning the immigration of high qualified experts. This directive is known as the EU Blue Card and was slated to be turned into national law by July 2012.

\* Former head of the staff of the German Federal Government's Commissioner on Migration, Refugees, and Integration, [nc-geiszbe@netcologne.de](mailto:nc-geiszbe@netcologne.de).

TABLE 1  
IMMIGRATION AND EMIGRATION OF GERMANS AND FOREIGNERS (1991-2010)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Immigration</i>			<i>Emigration</i>			<i>Net Migration</i>	
	Total	Foreigners (number)	Foreigners (%)	Total	Foreigners (number)	Foreigners (%)	Total	Foreigners
1991	1 198 978	925 345	77.2	596 455	497 540	83.4	602 523	427 805
1992	1 502 198	1 211 348	80.6	720 127	614 956	85.4	782 071	596 392
1993	1 277 408	989 847	77.5	815 312	710 659	87.2	462 096	279 188
1994	1 082 553	777 516	71.8	767 555	629 275	82	314 998	148 241
1995	1 096,048	792 701	72.3	698 113	567 441	81.3	397 935	225 260
1996	959 691	707 954	73.8	677 494	559 064	82.5	282 197	148 890
1997	840 633	615 298	73.2	746 969	637 066	85.3	93 664	-21 768
1998	802 456	605 500	75.5	755 358	638 955	84.6	47 098	-33 455
1999	874 023	673 873	77.1	672 048	555 638	82.7	201 975	118 235
2000	841 158	649 249	77.2	674 038	562 794	83.5	167 120	86 455
2001	879 217	685 259	77.9	606 494	496 987	81.9	272 723	188 272
2002	842 543	658 341	78.1	623 255	505 572	81.1	219 288	152 769
2003	768 975	601 759	78.3	626 330	499 063	79.7	142 645	102 696
2004	780 175	602 182	77.2	697 632	546 965	78.4	82 543	55 217
2005	707 352	579 301	81.9	628 399	483 584	77.0	78 953	95 717
2006	661 855	558 467	84.4	639 064	483 774	75.7	22 791	74 693
2007	680 766	574 752	84.4	636 854	475 749	74.7	43 912	99 003
2008	682 146	573 815	84.1	737 889	563 130	76.3	-55743	10 685
2009	721 014	606 314	84.1	733 796	578 808	78.9	-12 782	27 506
2010	798 282	683 530	85.6	670 605	529 605	79.0	127 677	153 925

SOURCE: Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge (Federal Office for Migration and Refugees) (2012), 18.

The situation is different for refugees. The EU has a common policy on asylum seekers and other refugees and even a common border security program (Frontex) along the Mediterranean Sea to prevent African refugees from entering Spain, Italy, Malta, and Greece. In February 2012, the European High Court of Human Rights decided that EU member states—it was referring specifically to Italy in this case—are not allowed to refuse refugees entry without having examined their applications for asylum.

### **Immigration to Germany/Emigration from Germany**

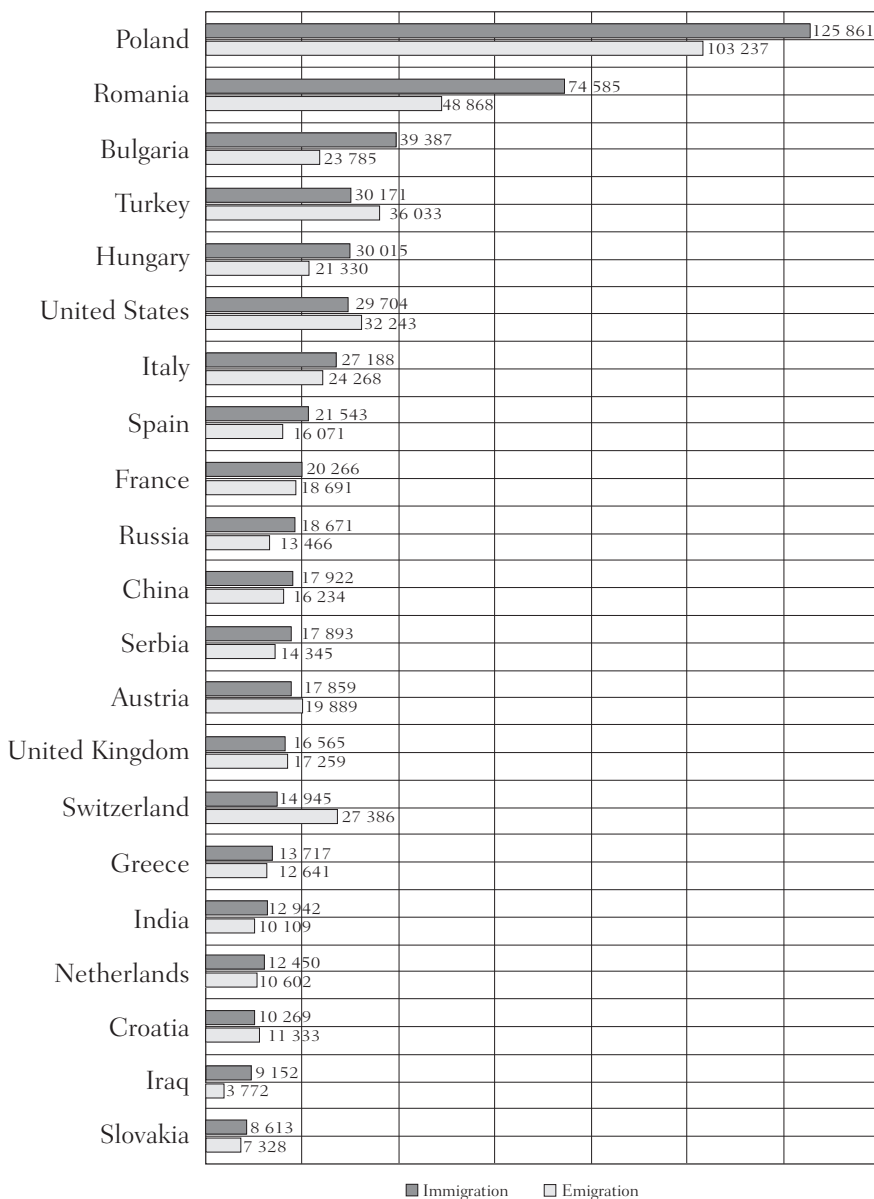
In 2010, nearly 798 000 persons immigrated to Germany, while 671 000 emigrated from Germany. Net migration (127 000) was positive. The figure for foreigners was positive (154 000); the figure for Germans was negative (-26 000).

Only in 2008 (-56 000) and 2009 (-13 000), just when the worldwide financial and economic crisis started, was net migration negative. The highest positive balances were recorded in the early 1990s, in 1991 (603 000) and 1992 (782 000). The main reasons for this were the fall of the Berlin Wall, which led to the immigration of ethnic Germans from the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, and the civil wars in the former Yugoslavia, which sparked streams of refugees. It is my assessment that the impacts of the recent financial and economic crisis on migration to Germany have been relatively small. There was, of course, a crisis in Germany; but, if you compare it with other economies in Europe, you can say that it lasted for only a short time. Although economic growth decreased, the employment rate remained nearly stable because of a special package of measures.

In this context, I have to mention especially what has been called “short-time-work” money. Instead of dismissing workers, they were paid lower wages for less work. The difference with the former full wage was paid by the government’s Federal Office of Labor. So, workers still had enough money to cover living costs. In macroeconomic terms, this means that the internal demand for goods and services did not drop. At the end of the economic crisis, companies did not have to look for new skilled workers and employees; they could immediately go back to full production and thus achieved a competitive advantage.

In some of the other European economies, circumstances were quite different. The impact of the recent economic crisis on migration was more serious. The UK has lost parts of its industrial structure over the last 25 years. London became one of the most important financial markets worldwide, but is very sensitive to crises. Spain has a real estate crisis and 50-percent unemployment among young people. Italy, Portugal, Ireland, and especially Greece took on large debts.

CHART 1  
IMMIGRATION AND EMIGRATION (MOST FREQUENT COUNTRIES  
OF ORIGIN AND DESTINATION, 2010)



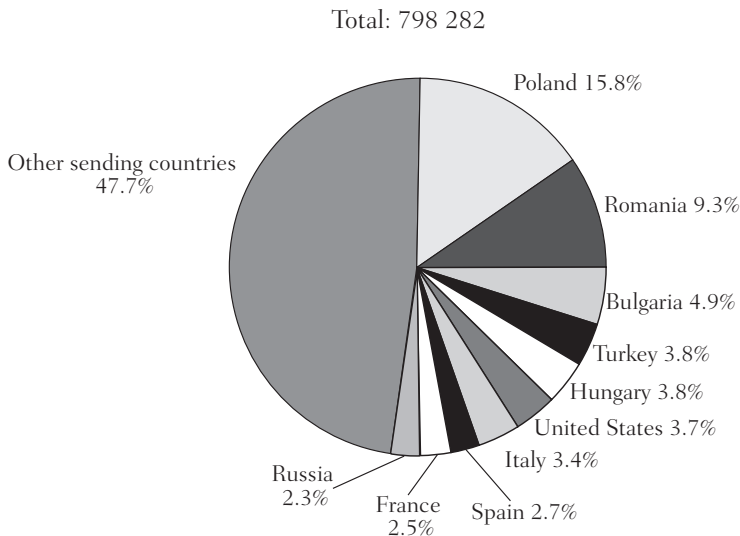
SOURCE: Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge (Federal Office for Migration and Refugees) (2012), 24.

## Where Did the Immigrants To Germany Come From in 2010?

Half of the migrants to Germany (400 000) came from other European countries, mainly from Poland (126 000); Romania (75 000); Bulgaria (39 000); Turkey (30 000), previously the main sending country; Hungary (30 000); the United States (30 000); Italy (27 000), the first country after World War II to sign a migration agreement with Germany (1955) to ensure a flow of workers and always an important sending country; Spain (22 000); and France (20 000).

The pie charts for immigrants and emigrants show that the numbers for immigration and emigration are similar for certain countries, for example Poland and Italy. Among the total figures of immigrants, 15.8 percent were Poles; among the emigrants 15.4 percent. But relatively more Romanians and Bulgarians immigrated than emigrated. For Turks, the opposite was the case.

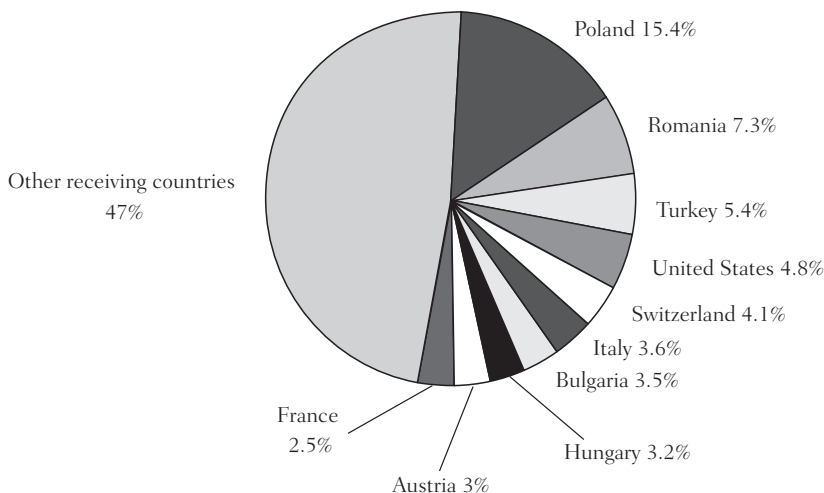
CHART 2  
IMMIGRATION AND EMIGRATION (MOST FREQUENT COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN, 2010)



SOURCE: Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge (Federal Office for Migration and Refugees) (2012), 21.

CHART 3  
IMMIGRATION AND EMIGRATION (MOST FREQUENT DESTINATION COUNTRIES, 2010)

Total: 670 605



Source: Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge (Federal Office for Migration and Refugees) (2012).

#### MEXICAN IMMIGRANTS AND EMIGRANTS IN GERMANY

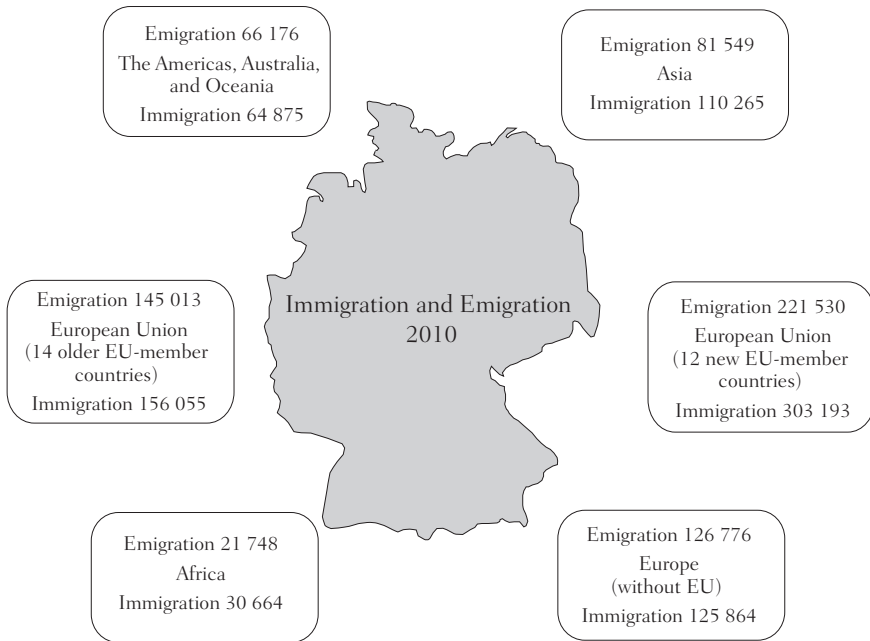
Since this academic forum is taking place in Mexico City, I will present some numbers concerning Mexican immigrants and emigrants in Germany; these numbers were relatively low.

In 2010, 3 670 Mexicans immigrated to Germany and 3 019 emigrated from Germany. The positive net migration was 651. Within the last 20 years, the annual numbers of immigrants increased —though the volume is very low— from 1 143 in 1991 to 2 442 in 2001, and, as I already mentioned, to 3 670 in 2010.

Germany's Federal Office of Migration and Refugees provided me with some (only partly published) detailed figures on Mexican migrants in Germany.

At the end of 2011, 10 543 Mexicans lived in Germany, among them 1 749 students. Among the 3 670 Mexicans who immigrated to Germany in 2010 were 970 first-year university students, 419 participants in language courses, 95 participants in occupational training, 328 workers (two-thirds of them skilled), 136 persons who were part of the international personnel exchange, and 10 highly qualified experts. In 2010, 280 bi-national marriages, 313 naturalizations, and 269 births of Mexicans were registered, and 604 Mexicans were granted visas for family reunification.

CHART 4  
WORLDWIDE IMMIGRATION TO AND EMIGRATION FROM GERMANY (2010)



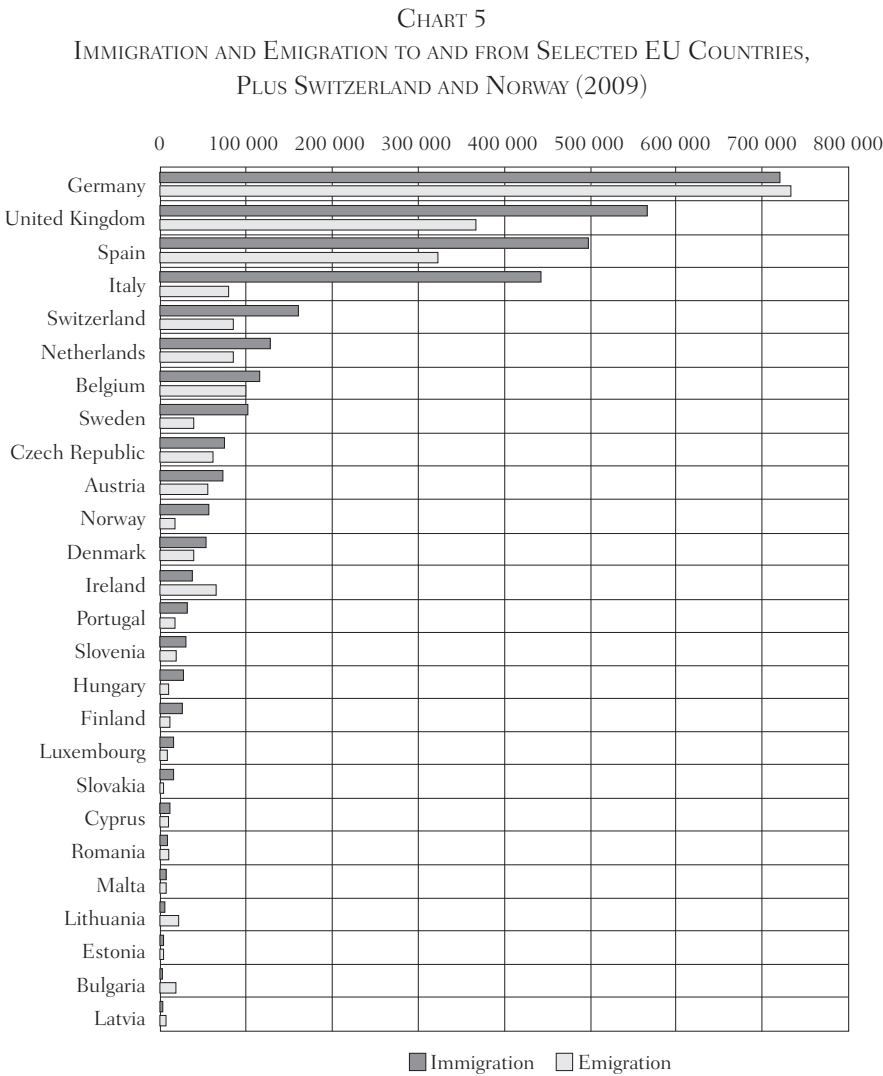
Source: Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge (Federal Office for Migration and Refugees) (2012), 20.

In 2010, 585 000 persons from other EU-member countries immigrated to Germany, 110 000 from Asian countries, 65 000 from the Americas and Australia, and only 31 000 from Africa, although it is geographically very close to Europe. The total number of immigrants in 2010 was nearly 800 000. About 493 000 emigrants returned to other European countries, 82 000 to Asian countries (30 000 less than those who immigrated from Asia to Germany); 66 000 emigrated to the Americas and Australia, bringing their net balance close to zero; and 22 000 emigrated to Africa, making its positive balance only 9 000.

#### IMMIGRATION TO DIFFERENT EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

The bar chart of migration in different European countries in 2009 shows that Germany, the UK, Spain, and Italy received the highest number of immigrants in Europe. Positive net migration was very high in the UK, Spain, and especially in Italy

(443 000 immigrants and only 80 000 emigrants). Spain and Italy changed from being sending to receiving countries.



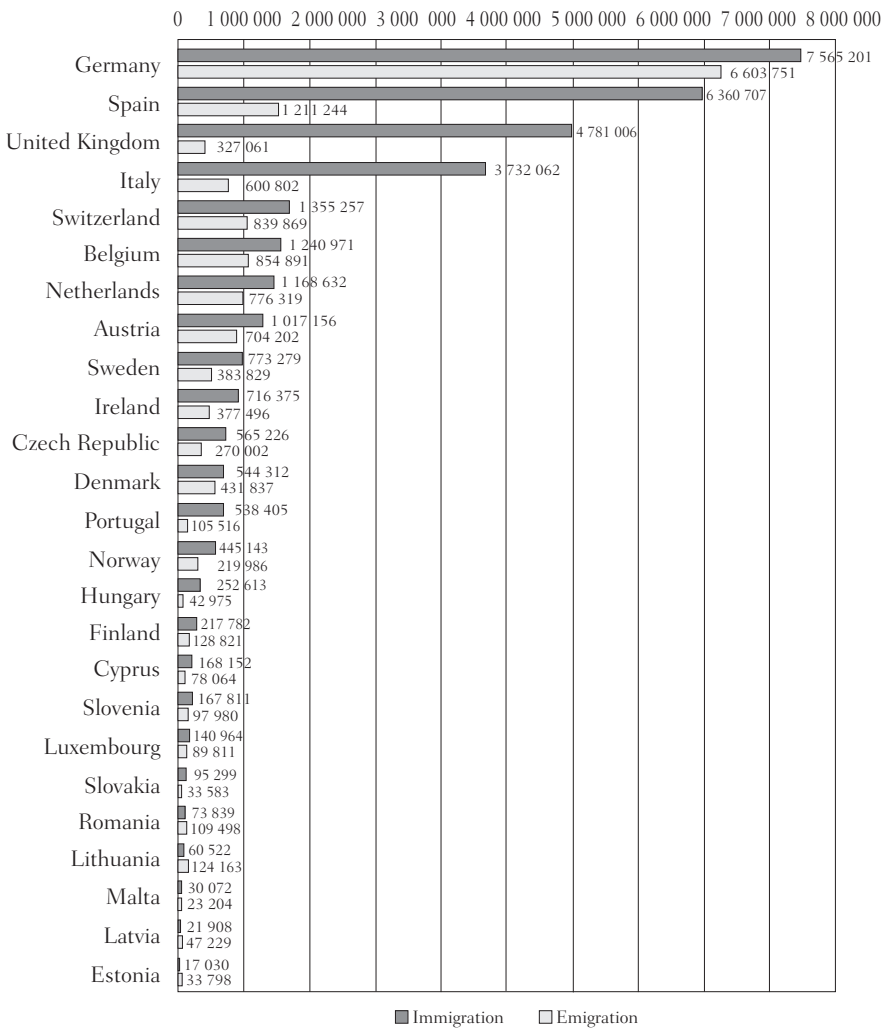
SOURCE: Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge (Federal Office for Migration and Refugees) (2012), 142.

The next chart demonstrates the accumulated immigration and emigration between 2000 and 2009 for some European countries. Here again, you can see that Spain and Italy in particular became receiving countries for migrants. In this



period, 6.4 million people immigrated to Spain and only 1.2 million emigrated; 4.8 million immigrated to Italy and only 600 000 emigrated from there.

CHART 6  
ACCUMULATED IMMIGRATION AND EMIGRATION TO AND  
FROM SELECTED EU COUNTRIES, PLUS SWITZERLAND AND NORWAY (2000-2009)



SOURCE: Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge (Federal Office for Migration and Refugees) (2012), 145.

## **Why Immigrate to Germany?**

The biggest group is made up of seasonal workers, mainly from Poland, Romania, and Bulgaria, who work in agriculture a few months a year (3 to 6 months) and then return to their home countries (294 000 seasonal workers came and went in 2010). The second biggest group is workers and employees and their families from other European countries (107 000). Sixty-six thousand immigrants were first-year undergraduates, and forty-one thousand, refugees and asylum seekers. (This last figure is quite low in contrast with the early 1990s, when it was quite high: in 1992, 438 000. The main reason for this high figure was the civil wars in the former Yugoslavia.). Forty thousand people immigrated for family reunification, a number that is decreasing. Foreign workers and employees numbered 28 000; contract workers (foreign workers in foreign companies, who are performing commissioned work in Germany), 18 000. Ethnic Germans (2 350) from the former Soviet Union and some other Eastern European countries whose ancestors had once emigrated to Eastern Europe and Russia, continue to immigrate to Germany. These figures are quite low today. In the beginning of the 1990s, every year more than 200 000 ethnic Germans immigrated to Germany.

Another small group of 1 000 Jewish migrants emigrated from Russia, where they were facing anti-Semitism. Finally, only 2 347 IT experts immigrated to Germany. In terms of labor market demand, this figure is far too small, demonstrating that Germany is not attractive enough for them. IT experts, for example from India, prefer English-speaking countries. There are other internal reasons that restrict the immigration of highly qualified migrants: lack of a welcoming culture and structure, restricted permission to remain, restricted work permits for husbands/wives, and finally various obstacles for young migrants and their families.

## **Migration, a Must**

The subject of my presentation was immigration to and emigration from Germany in the last few years. The underlying question was the impact of the recent economic crisis on international migration. As I mentioned above, it had no serious impacts on migration to Germany. This has to be explained by the short duration of the crisis in the country and the good use of special measures. Although Germany was successful in managing the last economic crisis, future challenges involving migration are rather large: by 2030 there will be a shortage of six million skilled workers and employees. The population will decrease from 82 million to 77 million by 2030, and to 65 million by 2060. More serious than the shrinking population will be an even more serious change of the age distribution. Neither Germany nor the EU has developed a modern, comprehensive migration policy until now. The mentality

CHART 7  
DIFFERENT GROUPS OF IMMIGRANTS (1991-2010)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Internal EU Migration (EU-14)</i>	<i>Family Reuni- fication</i>	<i>Ethnic Germans from Eastern Europe</i>	<i>Jewish Migrants (from Russia)</i>	<i>Asylum Seekers</i>	<i>Contract Workers</i>	<i>Seasonal Workers and Fairground Showmen Assistants</i>	<i>IT Experts</i>	<i>Foreign Students (under- graduates)</i>
1991	128 142	-	221 995	-	256 112	51 771	128.688	-	-
1992	120 445	-	230 565	-	438 191	94 902	212.442	-	-
1993	117 115	-	218 888	16 597	322 599	70 137	181.037	-	26 149
1994	139 382	-	222 591	8 811	127 210	41 216	137.819	-	27 922
1995	175 977	-	217 898	15 184	127 937	49 412	176 590	-	28 223
1996	139 382	-	222 591	8 811	127 210	41 216	137 819	-	27 922
1997	150 583	-	134 419	19 437	104 353	38 548	205 866	-	31 123
1998	135 908	62 992	103 080	17 788	98 644	32 989	207 927	-	34 760
1999	135 268	70 750	104 916	18 205	95 113	40 035	230 347	-	39 905
2000	130 683	75 888	95 615	16 538	78 564	43 682	263 805	4 341	45 652
2001	120 590	82 838	98 484	16 711	88 278	46 902	286 940	6 409	53 183
2002	110 610	85 305	91 416	19 262	71 124	45 446	307 182	2 623	58 480
2003	98 709	76 077	72 885	15 442	50 563	43 874	318 549	2 285	60 113
2004	92 931	65 935	59 093	11 208	35 607	34 211	333 690	2 273	58 247
2005	89 235	53 213	35 522	5 968	28 914	21 916	329 789	-	55 773
2006	89 788	50 300	7 747	1 079	21 029	20 001	303 429	2 845	53 554
2007	91 934	42 219	5 792	2 502	19 164	17 964	299 657	3 411	53 759
2008	95 962	39 717	4 362	1 436	22 085	16 576	285 217	3 906	58 350
2009	98 845	42 756	3 360	1 088	27 649	16 208	294 828	2 465	60 910
2010	107 008	40 210	2 350	1 015	41 332	17 983	293 711	2 347	66 413

SOURCE: Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge (Federal Office for Migration and Refugees) (2012), 42.

of a closed, homogeneous society and the idea that the country is a fortress, especially against Africa, is not only widespread in Germany. There is a demand for skilled workers: Germany needs, for example, engineers, medical doctors, and health care personnel. I mention this to illustrate that political decisions in the field of migration depend not only on purely economic considerations, but on traditions, mentalities, irrational imaginary scenarios, and, last but not least, the fear of strangers.

## **Acknowledgement**

I am grateful to Stefan Ruehl of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, Nuremberg, who provided me with data, and Petra Metzger, Cologne Round Table of Integration, who helped me to change the German version of the charts and diagrams into English.

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